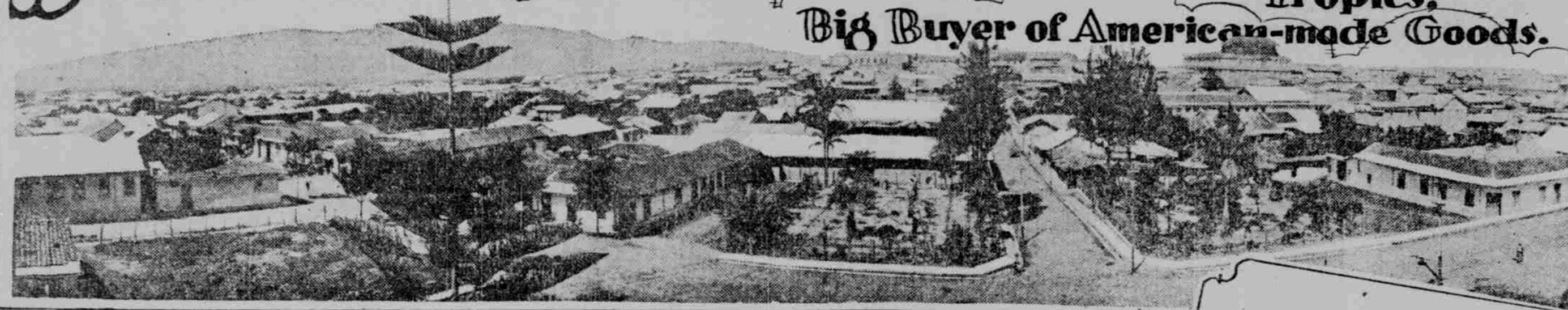


MAGNIFICENT COSTA RICA, Switzerland of Tropics.

Big Buyer of American-made Goods.



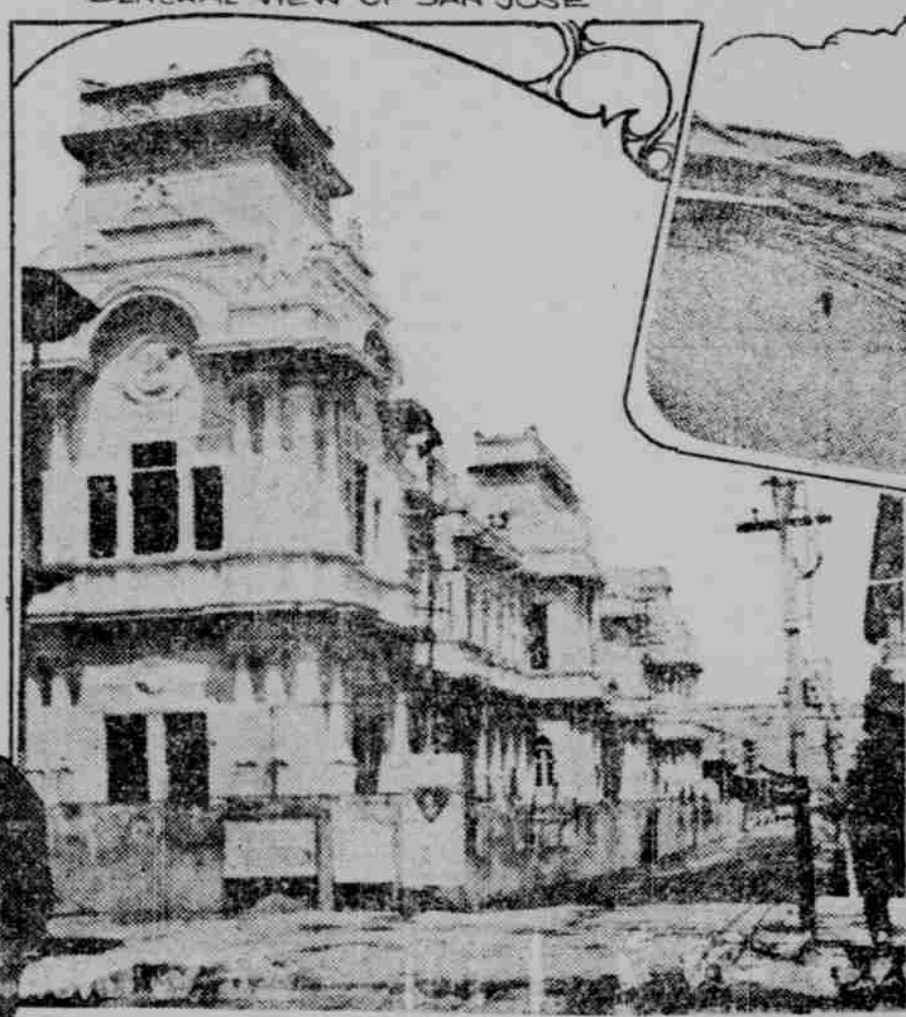
GENERAL VIEW OF SAN JOSE



S. G. SCHERMERHORN



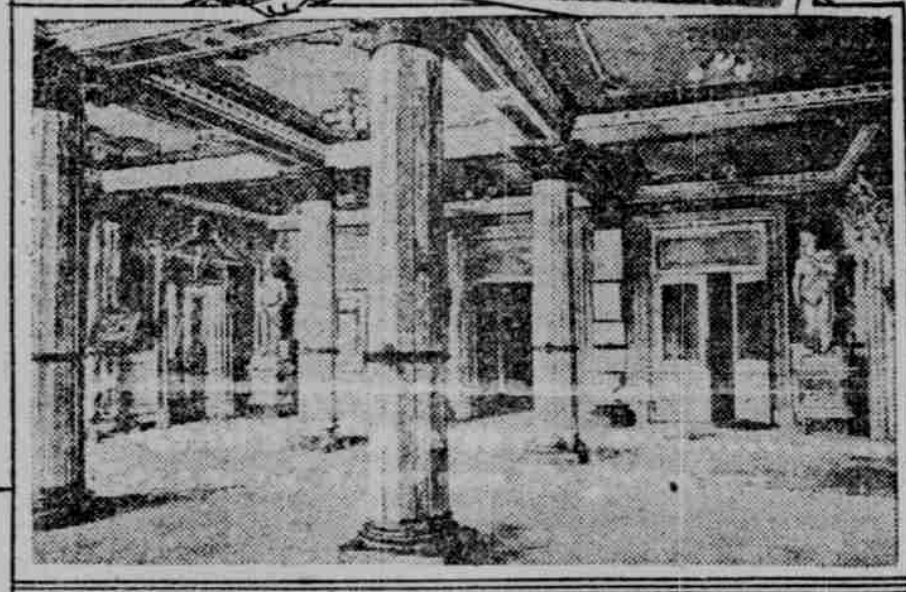
BERESEN WEST FARM



NEW POST OFFICE, SAN JOSE



LIMON WHARVES



ENTRANCE TO NATIONAL THEATRE, SAN JOSE

New Provisional President, Federico Tinoco, Is Firm Friend of the United States—Many American Visitors This Year in Wonderful Central American Republic, Which Is Twice as Large as Switzerland—Splendid Railroad System Built by Mr. Minor C. Keith—Overcoats in San Jose, the Capital.

By HAMILTON M. WRIGHT.

Canons a mile deep with sides draped in all the luxuriant verdure of the tropics, mountain summits and volcanoes lost in pearl-white billows of cloud that, from above, shimmer like tundras of the arctic snows, tropic lowlands on the sea coasts with groves of wavy, dreamy coconut palms, vast banana plantations and forests of giant trees like those of a primeval age, cool plateau regions with their ancient Spanish cities, a white population, automobiles, theatres, modern newspapers, libraries, schools, churches and cathedrals, a demand for American goods and a liking for Americans and their ways. These are some of the striking contrasts offered by Costa Rica, Switzerland of the tropical Americas, though it is more than twice the size of Switzerland.

To the people of the United States the citizens of Costa Rica send a message of welcome and a greeting. An invitation is extended to all Americans to visit Costa Rica. Those who do go will have much to see.

The highest mountain peaks here are scarcely less above sea level than the loftiest of our own Rocky mountains and they begin to rise almost from the sea while the American Rockies rise from a lofty plateau, the higher edge of the great plains region. There is a modern railway system to the heart of the country and San Jose, the capital, connecting with frequent steamer service to and from the States, only five days distant. The people are courteous and pleasant. There is nothing savage in the Costa Rican nature. The terrible electric chair and the grisly gallows do not cast their grim shadows across the human soul in Costa Rica. One who takes life here is placed in the penitentiary, where he can do no more harm, and is made comfortable and as useful as possible. The ultimate sentence for any crime is twenty years, long enough, they think, to expiate any wrong. A wagon will not drive down a street in San Jose if there is a sick person in a house thereon. The driver is advised by the policeman to go around the block. The other day in the great hospital of the United Fruit Company at Port Limon an Indian woman was thought to be dying. Transfusion of blood was the only step that promised to save her. A man who was no relative of the woman and had never seen her, offered his strong, healthy blood just because she was a woman. No one need ever go hungry in Costa Rica—the humblest family will divide its meal with a stranger.

Americans are popular here. Many of the greatest works in Costa Rica have been under American direction. Minor C. Keith astonished the railroad world when he built the line up to Cordillera. For a time the Costa Rican government was unable to make stipulated payments for the line, in which it has an interest. Yet more than 1,500 workers stuck by their American employer, Mr. Keith, for nine months without salary because they were sure of him. So the American name stands for achievement in Costa Rica.

Since the European war Costa Rica has purchased an increasing volume of American-made goods. They are liked. Hundreds of American tourists have visited Costa Rica during the past winter season and, of course, their presence is appreciated.

The population is enterprising. Ninety-five per cent of the people of the uplands are white. Here visitors see the flaxen-haired descendants of the Andalusian dons of Spain. The beauty of the Costa Rican women is notable. In San Jose the stores are conspicuous not alone for their varied assortments of high-priced articles and luxuries but for their attractive features of women's apparel. Formerly they were European in character. Since the war they have been almost completely stocked with American wares.

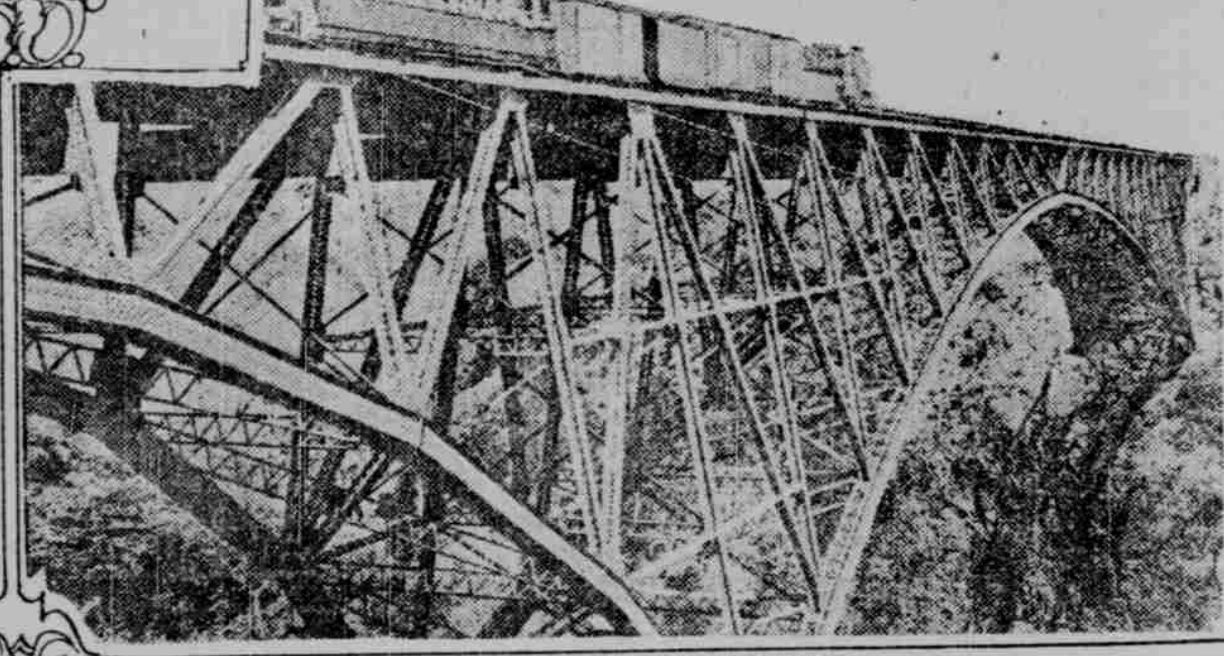
What is true of Costa Rica is true



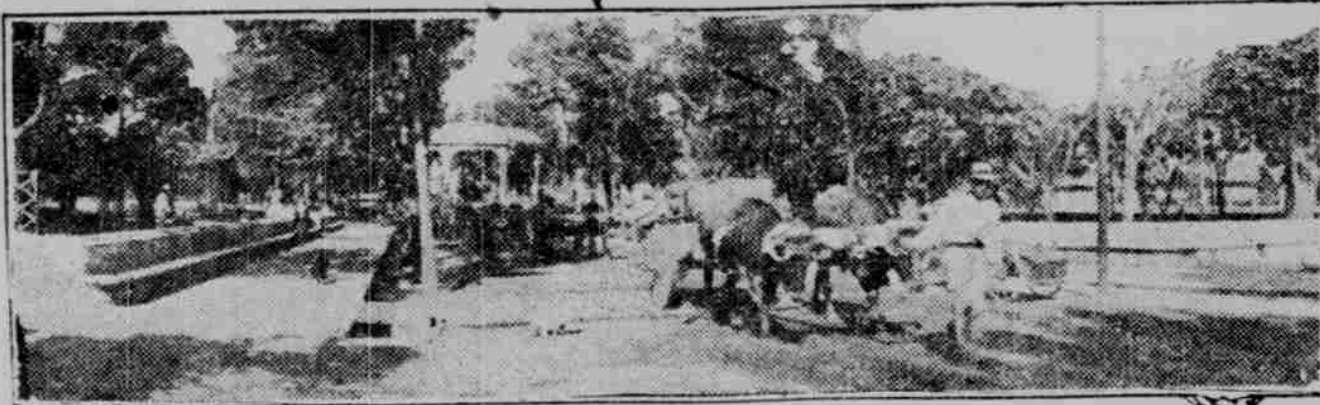
QUEEN OF THE NATIONAL BALL



MOUNT POAS



R.R. BRIDGE, PUENTO RIO GRANDE



PUBLIC SQUARE, SAN JOSE

of many another Latin-American country. They are buying from the States. Visit the Costa Rican shops and see. Enamelled and porcelain ware formerly bought from Germany are now bought from the good old U. S. A. Saddles formerly from England now come from America. Iron enamelled beds come from the United States now and they cannot get enough of them. Practically all cereals come from the States except oatmeal, part of which comes from Great Britain. The jewelry is practically all American. So are the druggists' goods. All the automobiles are American and San Jose is filled with them. All the hardware is of United States manufacture. The furniture once came from Germany and Austria. So did the umbrellas. Now we furnish both. Raisins, citron peel, currants and candied peel once came from England. These, too, we furnish. Combs, wigs, trunks, glass, perfumes (except some very fine varieties from La Belle, France), canned fish, fruits and meats, canned corn, peas, beans and other vegetables come from the United States. Some linens come from Ireland, cotton print goods from Spain, felt hats from Italy, mats from Japan, though American hats and cotton print goods are more and more on the market.

And in other lines you will find goods made under the Stars and Stripes right up in front of the Latin-American show case.

The railroad trip from Port Limon to San Jose is one of the most thrilling and picturesque journeys in the world. At times the line is one mile above the Reventazon river, whose course it follows for fifty miles.

There is no river as beautiful as a river in the tropics for nowhere is there such foliage to set it off. From the time the train enters the canon of the Reventazon until it has left that roaring stream a white ribbon in the far distant below, the visitor is treated to a continuous panorama varying from that of the sub-tropics to that of the high plateaus. An observation car is attached to the train which leaves Port Limon every morning at 9:40, reaching San Jose about four. There are two fine hotels, the Washington and the Hotel Francis, in San Jose which is a Simla for Panama Canal Zone employees, as it is only 26 hours from Colon.

Mr. Sheppard G. Schermerhorn, Executive Vice President of the United Fruit Company, is one of the constructive figures of Central America, having spent several years there during the period of expansion of the United Fruit Company's interests and like Mr. A. W. Preston and Mr. Minor C. Keith has won the

respect and admiration of the peoples and governments. Go a short distance from the railway line and you will find all sorts of wild creatures. Costa Rica is a Garden of Eden for wild life. There are three varieties of wild turkeys, each of them numerous and fine eating. Wild pigeons, some of them of great size, abound and are served in the San Jose hotels. There are three or four species of wild hogs. The other day a herd of 2,000 of them, in changing their feeding place from the Atlantic to the Pacific divide, passed within twenty miles of Alajuela. Needless to say, every one in the vicinity had a fine mess of roast pork. Deer are very common and the shipment of their hides to the States is a commercial industry. Otter, tapirs and monkeys are found in abundance. Giant green, red and yellow macaws, parrots and parrotlets, golden tailed weaver birds, canaries and humming and magnificent butterflies are large as one's hand are features of the country. The

fierce jaguar, "el tigre" of the people, sometimes preys on the cattle herds and when he does it is the custom to tip the horns of the bulls with steel. Many a marauding steer killer has met his death on the horns of a fighting bull. Big spotted leopards and puma or mountain lions are more numerous than the jaguars and less formidable. Not even jaguars ever attack a man. You can buy a good leopard hide, black and white and tinted with red, for \$2.50 to \$3 gold.

Twenty years ago Port Limon on the Atlantic side was a pest hole. Mr. Fairbairn, a resident there, told me the first year he came eighty Americans died. That was almost all there were in the place. You might meet a man in the morning at breakfast who would tell you he felt fit as a fiddle. At night you would learn that he had not only died but had been buried, for they lost no time in putting them away in those days. Yellow fever and the plague flew on wings and in a more than meta-

phorical sense. But the mosquito has been successfully combated; pure water and decent living quarters obtained. It's about ten years since there has been a case of yellow fever or plague in Port Limon. The great work has been accomplished by the United Fruit Company, which has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in sanitation. The company maintains a great hospital with a capacity for about 250 patients. The entire country is mapped with reference to sanitation and thus disease can be isolated and quarantined. It is part of President Andrew W. Preston's plan when the great organization started. Today Port Limon is healthy. It is an attractive place with a fine park, sea wall, and splendid wharves on which trains go to take passengers and freight. Here come on regular schedule the magnificent steamers of the White Fleet.

San Jose is practically in a different zone than Port Limon. People wear light overcoats in San Jose at night. Boys sell wooden baskets of big fresh strawberries at five cents a basket. The finest public building in Costa Rica is the Teatro Nacional (National Theatre), in San Jose, built at an expenditure of \$1,000,000 gold exclusive of furnishings. The outside is of white marble. The interior lobbies and foyer are of colorful Italian marble. Old tapestries, mural paintings, gold plate, and sculptures set it off. The magnificent foyer is in Louis XVI architecture though the building as a whole partakes more of Italian than French renaissance. The seats are of rosewood and mahogany with the national crest set in embossed leather. The stage is large enough

for the largest opera companies. The national library, the national museum with its live animals as well as prehistoric potteries are mighty interesting, while a visit to the churches and educational institutions in San Jose and Cartago is worth anybody's time.

Outside of San Jose are coffee plantations. The country is neat and well-kept. There are stone fences along the roads and bridges. In the drying plants you will see mounds of green coffee as high as a man's head, for the industry is a great one. The coffee exposed to the sun on concrete beds is constantly turned over so it will dry evenly and not ferment. The land in Costa Rica is as rich as Canaan. It grows cabbages, oranges, grape fruit, coffee, cocoa, potatoes, bananas, corn, sugar cane, alligator pears, tomatoes, lettuce, peas, beans, cauliflower, depending upon whether one is in the highlands or lowlands.

When we of the United States were in our revolutionary days Costa Rica had been colonized by the flower of Spain and today the visitor notes the evidence of a long established civilization. There is nothing finer of a cool bright morning in the highlands than to take a horseback ride or the train from San Jose to Alajuela or Cartago. The crowds themselves at the railway stations are worth notice. The short Spanish coat with square shoulders and ending at the hips is often seen. Broad hats and smart narrow shoes complete the costume. Revies of pretty girls in white with ribbons and parasols and often with high French heels are seen welcoming or bidding adieu to strangers. The priests in their black cassocks are always entertaining; many of them have been educated in Madrid or Paris. Most of them have visited the United States.

But the glory of Costa Rica is in her mountains. Above Cartago towers Mt. Iragu, 11,200 feet in altitude. One can make the trip to the summit and back by mule in 24 hours. On the way he will pass a sanitarium. Near Cartago are mineral springs. The city was destroyed by earthquake in 1910, but has since been finely rebuilt. Mt. Poas, reached from Alajuela on the railroad line, has a bath house on the summit. The firing of a pistol or shouting will cause a torrent of boiling water to catapult from the center. Chirripo Grande with an altitude of 15,424 feet is higher than either of these.

Thus it is that Costa Rica, marvelous mountain republic to the south of the United States, sends her greeting. She is at peace with the world and prosperous and has thanks for the far-seeing Americans who have contributed to her prosperity.